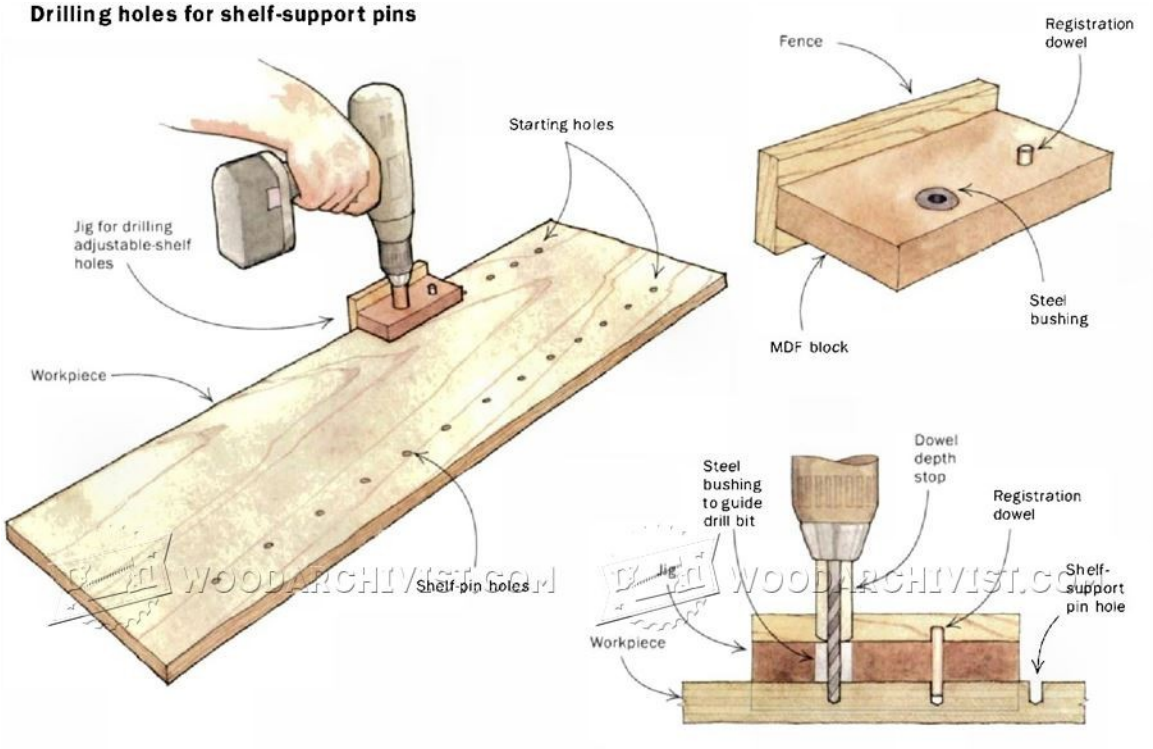
Drilling holes for shelf-support pins



Most jigs for drilling holes for shelf pins are awkward to use and bulky to store. By contrast, this simple homemade jig is small, accurate, easy to use and built to last.

To make this jig, start with a scrap block of ¾-in.-thick medium-density fiberboard (MDF) and screw a hardwood fence to one edge. Measure in from the fence and install a registration dowel sized to fit your shelf-pin hole. Both the fence and the registration dowel should extend past the surface on both sides of the block: This allows the jig to be flipped over and used along both edges of the workpiece.

Now measure a distance down from the registration pin and drill the guide hole. The distance from the registration pin to the guide hole will set the spacing of the shelf-pin holes. I prefer a spacing of 2 in. If the jig is to be used just once, you can use the guide hole as is. However, if you want a jig you can use over and over, install a steel bushing for the guide hole.

To use the jig, install a depth stop on the drill bit. For this use a ¾-in.-dia. dowel drilled along its axis and then cut to length so that only the correct amount of drill bit protrudes. Measure down from the top of the workpiece and drill two starting holes, one on each edge. Place the jig's registration pin in the first hole and, while holding or clamping the fence against the edge of the workpiece, drill the second hole. Repeat this sequence while walking the jig down the workpiece until you have drilled all of the shelf-pin holes along one edge. Flip over the jig and repeat the process along the other edge.

—Andrew Fairbank, Hammondville, NSW, Australia

Improved tablesaw splitter

Many woodworkers never attach the splitter that comes with their new tablesaw because it is cumbersome and inconvenient to use and has to be removed for some operations, such as cutting